



Inside MISSOURI HIGHER EDUCATION

MARCH 2014, ISSUE 3

COLLEGE COMPLETION

Helping Missouri students achieve their higher education goals



*Building Missouri's future...
by degrees®*

Table of Contents

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From the Commissioner	3
Calendar	4
College Application Week to be expanded	5
Exploring new ways to teach science and math	6
New 'library' will help students transfer college credit	8
College completion: Helping Missouri students achieve their higher education goals	9
Smart about Spending	13
Journey to College	14
News from around the state	15
International Education Day at the Capitol	18
Alternative math scores set for A+ Scholarship	19
Missouri recognized for work on 'reverse transfer'	20
FAFSA deadline for state aid approaching	21
STEM Day at the Capitol	22
New report looks at student interest in STEM	23
Staff member earns financial counselor certification	24
Russell receives MU College of Education award	24
More college presidents using social media to communicate with students	25
Department of Higher Education on Facebook	25
FAFSA Frenzy	26

Completing the Journey

The Department of Higher Education has long sponsored a Facebook page that provides information to students and their families about planning and paying for college. The page is aptly named *Journey to College*, and I recommend it to students who are about to embark on the journey and those who are well on their way.

Every student's educational journey is unique, marked by its own set of challenges and rewards. It is a path that can be influenced by many factors – academic preparation, financial resources and family dynamics, to name a few.

As we work to increase the percentage of Missourians with a two- or four-year degree or professional certificate, we must keep these factors in the forefront. After all, the journey is important, but so is arriving at the destination.

We know a degree or certificate can make a big difference in the lives of students across our state. The recent recession and ongoing economic recovery show just how much of a difference.

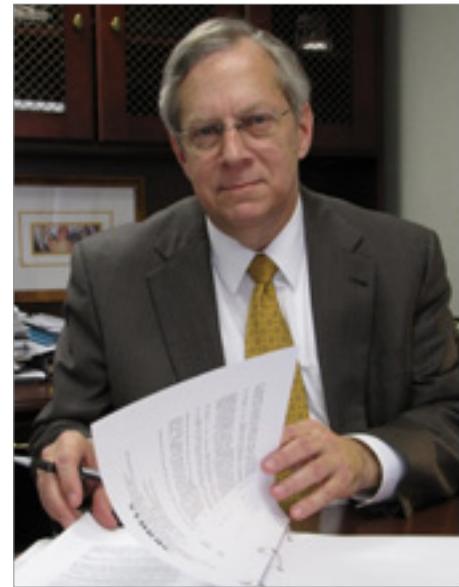
From 2007 to 2012, the number of jobs requiring only a high school diploma or less declined by 5.6 million. Economic data show that those jobs are not coming back. The number of jobs requiring an associate degree or some college declined by about 1.75 million, but those jobs have since been regained and are on the rise again. During that same time period, the number of jobs available to individuals with a bachelor's or advanced degree actually grew by 2 million. Clearly the road to future employment opportunities runs through postsecondary education.

DHE has deployed a multi-pronged strategy for promoting the importance of postsecondary education among young people and their families:

- Assisting high school students with the college and financial aid application process, with particular emphasis on first-generation and disadvantaged students.
- Removing barriers to ease the transfer of credits from one college to another to help students avoid unnecessary duplication of courses.
- Tackling such tough challenges as high remediation rates, which make it harder for many students to realize their dreams after high school.
- Holding the line on increases in tuition and fees, making Missouri one of the nation's leading states in preserving the affordability of a college degree.
- Awarding more than \$100 million in state financial aid annually to help with college costs.

Hundreds of individuals and organizations throughout the state have joined us in this work. We applaud all those who provide Missouri students with the guidance and support they need to complete a higher education program leading to a degree or certificate.

The journey to college is not truly complete until each student has earned the credential he or she is seeking – a degree that will set each graduate on the path to a productive and satisfying life.



David R. Russell
Missouri Commissioner of Higher Education

Interested in promoting a higher education event?
Send your information to social@dhe.mo.gov



- April 1: Access Missouri Financial Assistance Program FAFSA Deadline
- April 2: International Education Day at the Missouri State Capitol
- April 2-3: Coordinating Board for Higher Education meeting
- April 5-8: 94th American Association of Community Colleges Annual Convention
- April 8: Missouri Association of Student Financial Aid Personnel Hill Day
- April 11-12: College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy, "Destination Equity Conference 2014"
- April 16: Professional Development Series: Challenges Faced by First-Generation College Students and Their Families
- April 17: Mini Boot Camp for Financial Aid Professionals (MASFAP membership required)
- April 30: Kid's Chance Scholarship Application and FAFSA Deadline
- May 8: State Offices Closed: Truman Day
- May 8: Business Officer Training and Roundtable (MASFAP membership required)
- May 12-16: Fundamentals of Federal Student Aid Administration: Kansas City
- May 21: Support Staff Workshop (MASFAP membership required)
- May 26: State Offices Closed: Memorial Day



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Missouri College Application Week to be expanded this year

Following a successful pilot program last fall, College Application Week will be expanded in Missouri this year.

The Department of Higher Education hopes to double the number of schools participating in the October event.

Last year, 26 high schools in the Kansas City and the St. Louis areas and the south central part of the state took part in the program. More than 2,000 students submitted 3,600 applications to 260 postsecondary institutions.

"Encouraging students to explore their options for higher education and apply to college is an important step in helping more Missourians earn a postsecondary degree," said David Russell, Missouri commissioner of higher education. "We look forward to reaching out to more students by expanding College Application Week to additional schools throughout the state."

While the event was open to all seniors at the participating high schools, the focus was to increase the number of college applications submitted by low-income students and students who would be the first in their family to attend college.

The high schools provided the time and resources during the school day for the event. A variety of activities, including assemblies and college tours, provided

information about the importance of completing a higher education program and earning a two- or four-year degree or professional certificate.

College Application Week was sponsored by the department with assistance from the Missouri College Advising Corps, a group of recent graduates working in high schools with a large percentage of students who are less likely to attend college. Advisers worked one-on-one with students to help them complete applications.

Missouri was one of more than two dozen states sponsoring College Application Week activities in 2013.



"Encouraging students to explore their options for higher education and apply to college is an important step in helping more Missourians earn a postsecondary degree."



David Russell, Missouri commissioner of higher education, presents a certificate of appreciation to Beth Tankersley-Bankhead, executive director of the Missouri College Advising Corps, in recognition of the group's work during the 2013 Missouri College Application Week.

Exploring

new ways to teach science and math

Grant funds unique partnership between colleges and K-12 schools

One afternoon last summer, a group of teachers from several southern Missouri school districts held “cloud frames” toward the sky to observe the characteristics and movement of cloud formations. In a classroom nearby, another group of teachers peered through Magiscopes, simple but sturdy microscopes designed for young science students. A third group experimented with ultraviolet-sensitive beads to monitor the effects of light exposure.

The teachers were learning new ways to enhance science instruction during a year-long program that brings together math and science

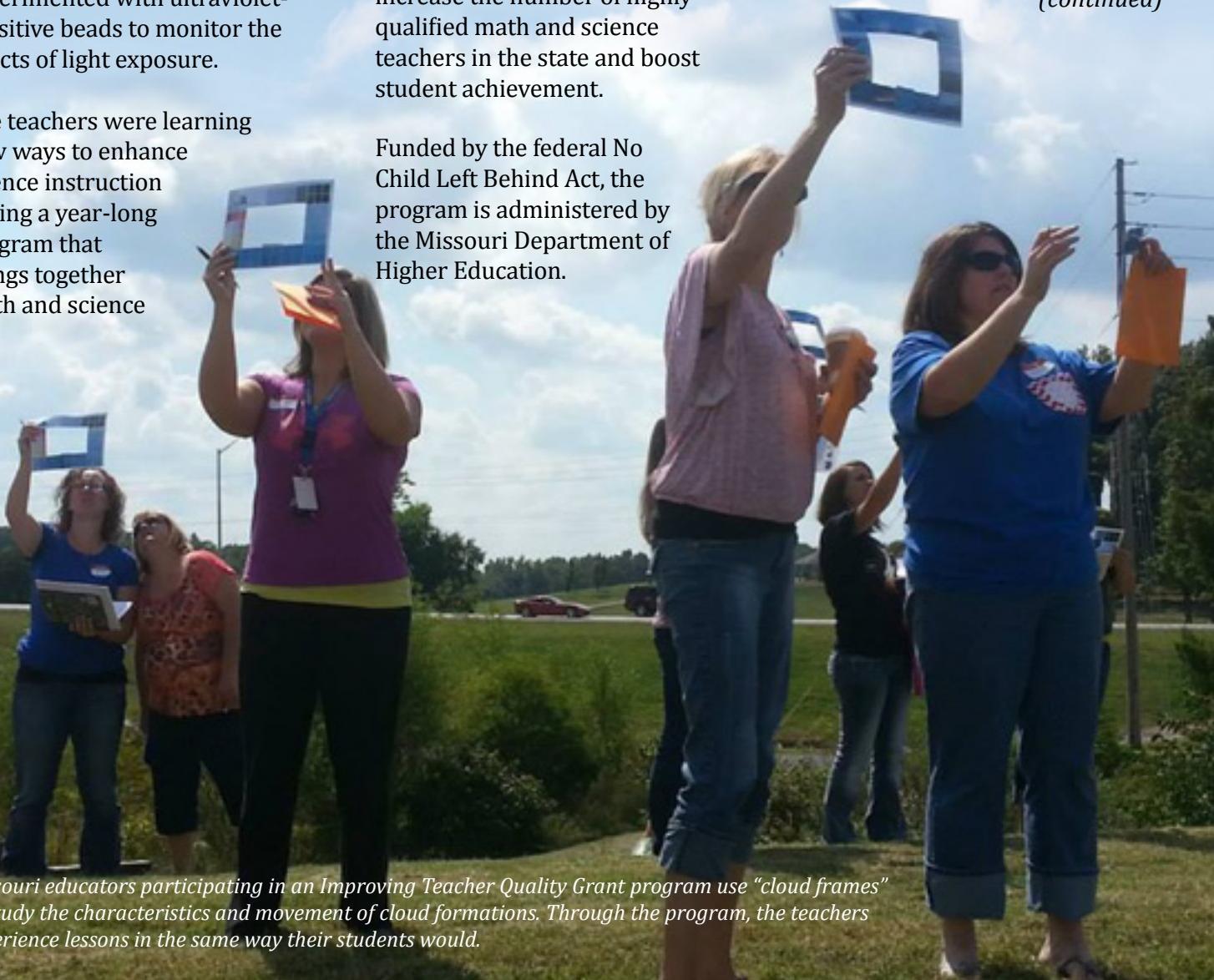
experts from Missouri’s colleges and universities and elementary and secondary educators. The Improving Teacher Quality Grant Program provides funding to the higher education institutions to offer content-focused, research-based professional development opportunities to K-12 teachers, principals and paraprofessionals.

The goal of the program is to increase the number of highly qualified math and science teachers in the state and boost student achievement.

Funded by the federal No Child Left Behind Act, the program is administered by the Missouri Department of Higher Education.

“This program is unique because of the relationship it promotes between higher education institutions and K-12 schools,” said Rusty Monhollon, assistant commissioner for academic affairs at the Department of Higher Education. “Few opportunities exist to mobilize the expert knowledge of postsecondary educators to directly support K-12 teacher improvement.”

(continued)



Missouri educators participating in an Improving Teacher Quality Grant program use “cloud frames” to study the characteristics and movement of cloud formations. Through the program, the teachers experience lessons in the same way their students would.

New ways to teach science and math

(from page 6)

During 11 grant cycles, the department has funded more than 80 projects, providing professional development to over 2,000 teachers and administrators in more than 200 school districts across the state.

The most recent grant recipients include:

- Missouri University of Science and Technology, Science Education and Quantitative Literacy: An Inquiry-based Approach (SEQL), directed by Dr. V.A. Samaranayake.
- Missouri State University-West Plains, Early Elementary Environmental Education: A Field-Based Approach, Directed by Dr. Alice (Jill) Black.

- Missouri State University, Transforming Mathematics Instruction Using Inquiry and One-to-One Environments (Trim 1+121), directed by Dr. Lynda Plymate.
- Southeast Missouri State University, Making Mathematics: Learning to Think and Apply, directed by Dr. Rita Fisher.

Each project includes a summer workshop lasting four to eight hours a day for one to two weeks, depending upon the specific professional development plan.

The initial workshops are followed by a year of training sessions.



During an inquiry lesson using ultra-violet beads, the teachers make observations about exposure to different types of lighting. Supplied with a variety of materials, the teachers were encouraged to create questions to further investigate the qualities of the beads.

Ultimately, the goals of the grant program are to:

- Improve student achievement in core subject areas.
- Increase teachers' knowledge and understanding of key concepts.
- Improve teachers' practices in inquiry-based instruction.
- Enhance teachers' knowledge and skill in designing and implementing assessment tools and use of assessment data to monitor the effectiveness of instruction.
- Impact the preparation of pre-service teachers.



An open exploration lesson using Magiscopes allows the teachers to familiarize themselves with how the microscopes work. The lessons are designed to be more student centered and less teacher directed. Following each activity, the teachers discuss how the lessons could be adapted and used in their classrooms and determined how each lesson supports specific learning standards.

The next round of grant applications is currently being evaluated. Recipients will be announced later this spring.

New 'library' will help students transfer college credit

Selected courses will count as one-to-one equivalents

The Department of Higher Education is nearing completion of a "transfer course library" to assist Missouri students with the transfer of selected courses at public colleges and universities in the state.

The Coordinating Board for Higher Education has approved 20 courses for the library and expects to add five more later this year.

Thousands of students in Missouri transfer college credit every year. In 2011, nearly 10,000 first-time undergraduate students transferred credit from one public postsecondary institution in the state to another.

Higher education officials say the library will make the transfer process easier for more students and could help improve college completion rates.

"We want to make it easier for students to transfer credits they have earned at one college or university to any other public institution and have those credits count toward a degree," said David Russell, Missouri commissioner of higher education. "The transfer library can help students earn degrees by making sure that some basic entry-level courses need not be taken twice just because a student transfers to a new institution."

The library is being developed by the Department of Higher Education in cooperation with the state's public four-year and two-year institutions. The library listing will provide information about courses that transfer on a one-to-one equivalent basis among all public colleges and universities in Missouri.

State legislation approved in 2012 called for the department to create a transfer library of 25 courses by July 1. The board approved the first four courses for the library in September 2013 and added 16 more courses in February.

The department is currently working with higher education institutions in the state to identify five additional courses for board approval by mid-summer. The department plans to eventually increase the library beyond the minimum 25 courses required by state law.

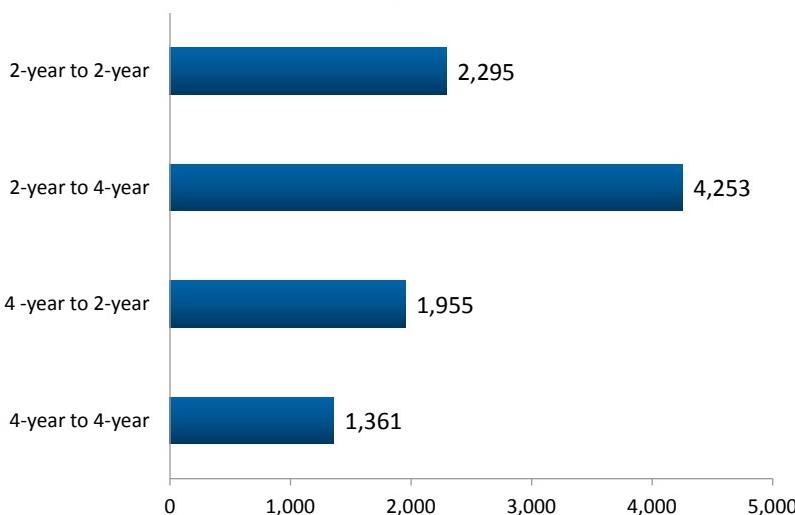
An electronic database is currently being developed to make the library easily accessible for students.

Courses approved for transfer library:

- American government
- American history I
- American history II
- Anthropology
- Art appreciation
- Astronomy
- Calculus I
- College algebra
- Drawing I
- Introduction to statistics
- Macroeconomics
- Microeconomics
- Music appreciation
- Oral communication
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- Public speaking
- Sociology
- Western civilization
- World religions

Transferring College Credit

Missouri first-time undergraduate transfer students*



*Students transferring among public 2-year and 4-year institutions in 2011

COLLEGE COMPLETION

Helping Missouri students achieve their higher education goals

More than 90,000 students will graduate from Missouri higher education institutions this year, but the state is fast approaching the point of not producing enough graduates to meet the needs of a rapidly changing workforce.

By 2018, nearly 60 percent of all jobs in Missouri will require some form of postsecondary education – a two- or four-year degree or a professional certificate, according to the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University.

To address the growing need for college graduates, the state has set a goal – what the Department of Higher Education calls Missouri's Big Goal – for 60 percent of working-age adults to have a two- or four-year degree or professional certificate by the year 2025.

"To provide the knowledgeable and skilled workforce Missouri needs, we must break down the barriers to college completion and help more students earn a degree or professional certificate," said David Russell, Missouri commissioner of higher education.

In 2011, just over 36 percent of adults in Missouri had an

associate or bachelor's degree. When professional certificates are included, the number of Missourians with a postsecondary credential increased to 46 percent – 14 percent short of the 60 percent goal.

Missouri must increase its annual production of degrees and certificates by about 3,000 each year for the next 11 years to achieve its goal.

Postsecondary progress

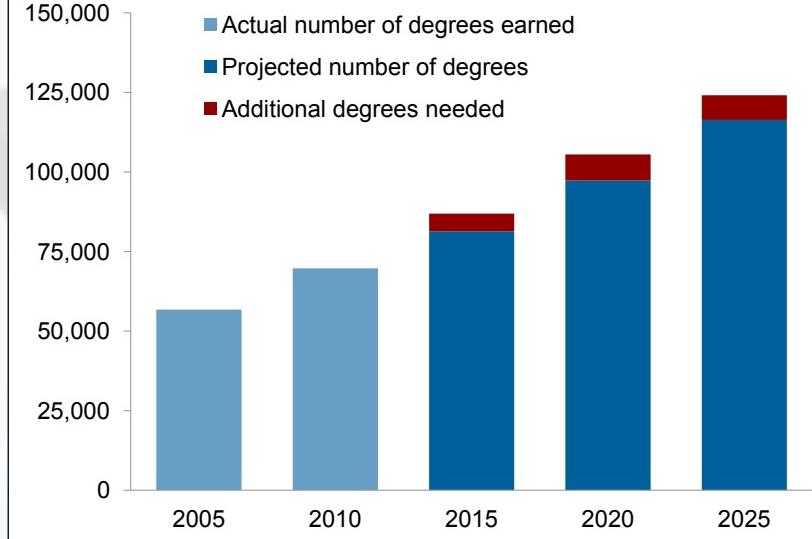
In recent years, Missouri has made some progress in improving its college completion rates. The

state ranked sixth in the nation in degree growth in 2011, according to the Lumina Foundation, a national organization working to increase the number of Americans with high-quality college degrees and professional certificates.

The percentage of adults in Missouri with a postsecondary credential increased about 1.5 percent from 2008 to 2011. Even with that growth, the state continues to rank below the national average in the percentage of residents having an associate or bachelor's degree. Nationwide, 38.7 percent of the population had

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Reaching Missouri's Big Goal



COLLEGE COMPLETION

(from page 9)

an associate or bachelor's degree in 2011.

There is some indication that young adults in Missouri are realizing the importance of higher education. The degree attainment rate for adults ages 25-34 sits at 40 percent, 4 percent higher than the rate for the adult population as a whole. Missouri's rate of degree attainment for young adults is just shy of the national rate of 40.1 percent.

Missouri's efforts recognized

Last year, Missouri's work to increase the percentage of the adult population with a college degree was recognized by DeWayne Matthews, vice president for policy and strategy for the Lumina Foundation. Matthews spoke at a meeting of Missouri college and university presidents and members of the institutions' governing boards.

He said legislation approved in 2012 to help decrease the time it takes to obtain a degree – by making the transfer of college credits more efficient and implementing best practices in remediation – will have a positive impact on Missouri's work to increase college completion.

Matthews recommended a number of strategies to further increase

degree attainment in Missouri, including:

- Align K-12 and postsecondary education.
- Define "college ready" and institute high standards at the secondary education level to eliminate the need for remediation at the postsecondary level.
- Use performance funding to reward institutions for efficient degree production.
- Collaborate across higher education institutions.
- Keep college affordable.

language arts and math to provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful beyond high school.

The Department of Higher Education strongly supports the new standards, which are set to be fully implemented by the 2014-2015 academic year.

"The Common Core Standards align with entry-level college courses and should greatly reduce the need for remedial education at the college level," said Rusty Monhollon, assistant commissioner for academic

Legislation to help decrease the time it takes to obtain a degree will have a positive impact on Missouri's work to increase college completion.

- DeWayne Matthews, Lumina Foundation

College and career readiness

Missouri's Task Force on College and Career Readiness was established to address a number of issues essential to preparing Missouri's students for college-level work and a career. The task force has been involved with Missouri's adoption and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for English

affairs at the Department of Higher Education. "This will help improve college completion rates and increase the percentage of Missourians with degrees."

Remedial education

Currently, more than one-third of students entering college in Missouri must take remedial classes in math or English before they can enroll in a corresponding credit-bearing course.

(continued)

COLLEGE COMPLETION

(from page 10)

Too often, students who need remedial education do not go on to obtain a degree.

Nationwide, fewer than 10 percent of students taking remedial classes graduate from a two-year college within three years. Slightly more than one-third of students in remedial classes graduate with a bachelor's degree within six years.

Legislation approved by the Missouri General Assembly in 2012 directed the Coordinating Board for Higher Education to require all higher education institutions to implement best practices in remedial education to help more students successfully complete remedial classes to move on to credit-bearing college-level coursework.

Working with higher education officials from across the state, the department began work on a plan to improve remedial education in Missouri.

The coordinating board approved the plan, the *Principles for Best Practice in Remedial Education*, in September 2013. The department is working with Missouri's higher education institutions, the state's Task Force on College and Career Readiness and the Missouri Developmental Education Consortium to implement the principles. The target date for full implementation is fall 2015.

Completion Academy

Improving remedial education was a major focus of Missouri's first Completion Academy in September 2013. Nine public colleges and universities were selected to participate in the two-day session with higher education experts from Complete College America. The academy addressed a number of areas that impact students' ability to complete a degree or certificate program. In addition to remediation, the academy focused on strategies to improve student retention rates, increase course completion, and reduce the amount of time it takes students to earn a degree.

During the academy, the institutions developed strategies to help more of their students earn a degree or certificate. Those strategies include offering "corequisite" classes that provide academic support for students while they are taking full-credit courses instead of requiring remedial classes and developing "guided pathways to success" that include academic maps, increased interaction with college advisors and block scheduling to ensure students are taking the classes they need to earn the degree they are seeking.

The participating colleges and universities are currently working to implement the strategies on their campuses.

MISSOURI COMPLETION ACADEMY

Nine colleges and universities participated in Missouri's first completion academy in September 2013 to develop strategies to improve their college completion rates.

- East Central College
- Harris-Stowe State University
- Jefferson College
- Lincoln University
- Metropolitan Community College
- Moberly Area Community College
- Northwest Missouri State University
- Southeast Missouri State University
- St. Louis Community College

Improved course transfer

Two provisions in the higher education legislation approved in 2012 are designed to improve college completion rates by helping students transfer credit from one college to another. The Department of Higher Education is currently developing a "transfer course library" to help streamline the process of transferring specific courses from one college to another in Missouri. The library will provide a listing of entry-

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COLLEGE COMPLETION

(from page 11)

level courses that will transfer as one-to-one equivalents among all public colleges and universities in Missouri. The legislation calls for the library to include 25 courses by July 1.

The transfer course library will help students avoid having to duplicate classes when they transfer from one college to another – reducing the time and costs associated with earning a degree.

The Missouri Reverse Transfer Program is designed to help more students earn an associate degree. The program creates a statewide policy that allows a student to transfer college credit from a four-year university to a two-year college the student has attended in order to complete the requirements for an associate degree.

The program is currently being piloted at 11 colleges and universities in the state and will be expanded statewide in the fall.

Performance funding

In 2011, Gov. Jay Nixon directed the Department of Higher Education to develop a funding formula for Missouri's colleges and universities that ties future state funding increases to performance. The coordinating board approved a performance funding model based on five performance measures, including several

measures that address college completion. Each higher education institution can earn one-fifth of its available performance funding by demonstrating success for each one of its five performance measures.

Performance measures for four-year colleges and universities include the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate, the percentage of full-time freshmen completing 24 hours of credit their first year in college and the percentage of students completing a bachelor's degree in six years.

Performance measures for the state's community colleges include the percentage of developmental education students who successfully complete their last remedial class and first college-level course in English and math and the percentage of full-time students completing an associate degree in three years.

Fiscal year 2014 was the first year new funding for Missouri's colleges and universities was based on the performance funding measures.

College costs

College costs in Missouri remain among the lowest nationwide.

According to a 2012 report from the College Board, tuition and fee

increases at Missouri's public four-year colleges were the lowest in the country during the prior three years. Tuition and fee increases at the state's two-year colleges were the fourth lowest nationwide. Tuition and fees at Missouri's two-and four-year colleges are consistently less than the national average.

Missouri assists thousands of students with the cost of college every year through a number of state financial aid programs, including the Access Missouri Grant program and the Bright Flight and A+ Scholarship programs.

During the 2012-2013 school year, Missouri awarded more than \$104 million in state-based financial aid to more than 74,000 students.

Looking ahead

With several new programs ready to be implemented statewide over the next two years, higher education officials believe Missouri has set the stage to further improve its college completion rates.

"Reaching our goal to increase the percentage of Missourians with postsecondary credentials will be a challenge," Russell said. "But we believe the policies and initiatives we have put in place will help more students earn a degree or certificate and experience the benefits higher education can offer."

Marilyn Landrum is a default prevention and financial literacy expert at the Missouri Department of Higher Education.

SMART ABOUT SPENDING 101



With spring quickly approaching, it is time for students preparing to start college in the fall and those already attending college to determine the types of financial aid for which they are eligible.

The first step for students who have not yet completed their Free Application for Federal Student Aid, is to submit it as soon as possible. Students must complete a FAFSA for each year they are enrolled in college and want to receive financial aid. Eligibility for federal aid such as the Pell Grant, the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and the Federal Work-Study Program, depends on the completion of the FAFSA.

A FAFSA must also be submitted to be eligible for some state financial aid including the Access Missouri Financial Assistance Program and the Marguerite Ross Barnett Memorial Scholarship. The deadline for state aid is April 1.

Even if students are not eligible for grants or scholarships, they must

complete the FAFSA in order to take out a Federal Direct Student Loan.

FAFSA Frenzy events are held each year to help students and their families fill out the form. These events are set at locations throughout Missouri during January, February and March. Students also can receive assistance from the financial aid office at the college or university they plan to attend.

Students should be sure to check into other state financial aid programs, including the A+ Scholarship Program, Bright Flight Program and the Advanced Placement Incentive Grant. More information about these and other state-aid programs can be found in the "The Source," published annually by the Department of Higher Education.

It is important that students search for all the "free" financial aid they can find before committing to the financial obligations that come with student loans. Scholarships, grants and work-study assignments

are available to students of all ages and backgrounds. Various types of financial aid are based on many different factors including a student's financial need, scholastic abilities, civic involvement, athletic skills and even religious affiliation. Students should be sure to find out about all forms of aid available from federal, state, institutional and local sources each year they are in school.

Students who receive grants and scholarships that do not have to be repaid should make sure they know what it takes to keep them! Some grants and scholarships require a minimum grade point average, a specific number of credit hours earned per semester and other requirements.

The bottom line is students should:

- Submit their FAFSA early.
- Apply for every scholarship for which they may be eligible.
- Meet FAFSA and scholarship deadlines.



As seniors in high school, the Missouri Department of Higher Education's interns are progressing along the journey to college. The interns are sharing their personal experiences to create a dialogue between students and postsecondary administrators, college access professionals and guidance counselors.

Making the most of our senior year

It's difficult to think of our final year in high school as "the year of lasts." As seniors, we'll be attending our last homecoming game, completing our last high school class and making our last impression as the Class of 2014.

From these experiences, we know it's important to make the most of our senior year.

We know how important it is to stay ahead of the curve with academics and the college admissions process. Being urged to complete tasks as early as possible might seem like cliché nagging from parents or counselors, but it's actually good advice.

Getting things done sooner, rather than later, frees up time to relax without worrying about looming deadlines and prevents

unfortunate situations that many students let characterize much of their senior year.

In addition to filling out college and financial aid applications, there are other things we know we should do during our senior year. We are searching for scholarships and taking the ACT for the final time. We'll do anything we can to lower the costs that come with going to college.

We are also participating in extracurricular activities. Besides our GPA, ACT scores and class ranking, many colleges and universities want to know about the activities and hobbies we engage in outside the classroom.

We have volunteered at the local food bank, animal shelter and the Special Learning Center for

children with special needs. We also participate in Key Club events like "Kids' Day," "Reading Buddies," and a 5K run at the local lake.

Volunteer opportunities are definitely good for giving back to the community and rounding out our resumes.

Part-time jobs are also a great addition to our resumes and can add to our college savings.

As seniors, it is important for us to consider how our extracurricular activities can benefit us in the future.

High school seniors Eddie Crouse, Alex Prenger and Hanna Berendzen are interns at the Missouri Department of Higher Education.



NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

Pre-admissions program expanded to train more rural physicians

Seven colleges and universities have been added to the University of Missouri School of Medicine's pre-admissions program. The program is designed to train more physicians to practice in rural Missouri.

Beginning with the 2013-2014 application year, students from the following schools will be eligible for the program:

- Missouri Western State University, St. Joseph
- William Jewell College, Liberty
- Missouri Southern State University, Joplin
- Westminster College, Fulton
- Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville
- University of Missouri-St. Louis
- University of Missouri-Kansas City

This brings the total number of higher education institutions participating in the Bryant Scholars Pre-admissions Program to 13.

Through the program, eligible undergraduate students are pre-admitted to medical school at the University of Missouri. The students are required to achieve certain academic standards, demonstrate ongoing professional conduct and participate in required activities.

For more information, visit:
<http://medicine.missouri.edu/ahec/pre-admissions.html>.

Missouri S&T offering nation's first Ph.D. in explosives engineering

The Missouri University of Science & Technology has become the country's first higher education institution to offer a Ph.D. in explosives engineering. According to the university, the new doctorate program will help fill critical workforce needs in government and industry.

The university was also the first in the nation to offer undergraduate and post-graduate minors, a post-graduate certificate and a master's degree in explosives engineering.

More than 150 students have graduated from Missouri S&T with explosives credentials. Sixteen courses in the program are available on campus and through distance-learning. The program is part of the university's mining and nuclear engineering department.

For more information, visit:
<http://explosives.mst.edu/>.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE



New leader selected for Columbia College

Scott Dalrymple has been selected to serve as the new president of Columbia College.

For the past four years, Dalrymple was dean of the School of Liberal Arts at Excelsior College in Albany, N.Y. He also served as chair and associate professor of business administration and accounting at Hartwick College in Oneonta, N.Y., and chair of the business, accounting, and economics department and director of the MBA program at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kan.

Dalrymple, a native of Nunda, N.Y., holds a bachelor's degree in English from State University of New York at Geneseo and a master's degree in business administration, a master's degree in English and a Ph.D. in English from University at Buffalo.



Crowder College names next president

Jennifer Methvin has been chosen as the next president of Crowder College in Neosho.

Methvin has been vice-chancellor for academics at the University of Arkansas at Hope since 2005 where she also served as division chair for arts and sciences and coordinator for off-campus credit courses. Prior to her work at the University of Arkansas, she was an assistant professor of English at Arkansas State University-Newport and an adjunct professor at Arkansas State University-Beebe.

Methvin holds a bachelor's degree in creative writing and English from Arkansas Tech University, a master's degree in creative writing and English from Oklahoma State University and a Ph.D. in community college leadership from Walden University.



University of Missouri welcomes new chancellor

R. Bowen Loftin began his duties as the new chancellor at the University of Missouri on Feb. 1.

A Texas native, Loftin was president of Texas A&M from 2010 to 2014. He previously served as vice-president and chief executive officer of Texas A&M at Galveston where he was a professor of maritime systems engineering. Prior to joining Texas A&M, Loftin was a professor of electrical and computer engineering and professor of computer science at Old Dominion University. He also chaired the department of computer science and served as director of the NASA Virtual Environments Research Institute at the University of Houston.

Loftin graduated from Texas A&M with a bachelor's degree in physics. He earned a master's degree and Ph.D. in physics from Rice University.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

Lindenwood University participating in new STEM program

Lindenwood University has announced plans to participate in a program designed to increase interest among middle school students in science, technology, engineering and math education.

The university will partner with the Matter organization to offer the Academy of Racing Science to students at middle schools located throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area. The program brings STEM curricula to life for students through interactive experiences at the Pole Position Raceway in St. Louis.

Matter is an organization working to advance STEM education and careers.

As part of the partnership, Lindenwood faculty members will work with Matter and STEM educators to develop lesson plans related to the Missouri Learning Standards and Next Generation Science Standards STEM curricula.

Students from participating schools will then apply those lessons through hands-on activities at the Pole Position Raceway.

"Students at the middle school level are typically exposed to STEM subjects through primarily classroom learning, which may not be sufficient in itself anymore moving forward," said Terry Stewart, assistant dean of educational leadership at

Lindenwood. "The Academy of Racing Science is something new that will expose students to authentic learning experiences designed to inspire their interest in STEM subjects and encourage their consideration of careers in those fields."

The program will be piloted in April and May. Approximately 2,500 middle school students are expected to participate in the program during the 2014-2015 academic year.

Lindenwood faculty members will conduct ongoing evaluations of the project to assess changes in student awareness of STEM and STEM educator preparation.

College Advising Corps receives grant to reduce 'summer melt'

The Missouri College Advising Corps has received a grant from the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation to open a College Connections Center in Kansas City this summer.

The center is designed to reduce "summer melt" by providing no-cost, one-on-one assistance to high school graduates so they follow through on their plans to attend college in the fall.

The Center in Kansas City anticipates serving students from 66 high schools in three Missouri counties and 38 high schools in two Kansas counties.

Major partners working with the Missouri College Advising Corps on the center include Kauffman Scholars, Inc. and the University of Central Missouri. Space for the center is being provided at no cost by Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley.

College admissions representatives and financial aid staff from Kansas City area colleges and universities, Kansas City area college access programs, including the Missouri College Advising Corps advisers, and certified high school counselor

counselors will volunteer at the center.

The College Advising Corps was selected as one of three sites nationwide to pilot the My Summer GPS online data tracking system designed by College Bound of St. Louis specifically for transition programs provided for students during the summer between high school completion and college enrollment.

For more information about the College Advising Corps visit: <http://mcac.missouri.edu/>.



Missouri College Advising Corps
University of Missouri



Find out more about the
Study Missouri Consortium

Promoting cultural exchange

Study Missouri Consortium to host International Education Day at the Capitol



International students from colleges and universities across Missouri tour the State Capitol during last year's International Education Day at the Capitol. This year's event is set for April 2.

More than 400 international and study-abroad students from Missouri's colleges and universities are expected to gather in Jefferson City April 2 to participate in International Education Day at the Capitol.

The event is hosted annually by the Study Missouri Consortium, a group of more than 40 of the state's postsecondary institutions working together to promote international education and highlight the importance of cultural exchange.

The day-long event is designed to give students an opportunity to witness Missouri's legislative process and share their experiences with other international students. Tours of the Capitol and meetings with state lawmakers are also planned.

"Many international students are very interested in learning about our government and our way of life," said Britta Wright, chair of the Study Missouri consortium and one of the organizers of the event. "International Education Day also gives the students a chance to talk with each other about the things they are seeing and doing in the United States."

International Education Day has attracted students from as many as 70 countries in previous years. Missouri students who have studied abroad also participate in the event.

During the 2012-2013 school year, more than 17,300 international students attended a Missouri college or university, and more than 5,000 Missouri

students studied abroad, according to the Institute of International Education. Missouri ranks 12th in the nation in the number of international students enrolled in the state's colleges and universities.

The Study Missouri Consortium also hosts a photo contest as part of International Education Day. Winning photos from international and study-abroad students will be on display in the Capitol Rotunda during the event.

For more information about International Education Day at the Capitol contact Wright at blwright@ccis.edu.





[Read more about
Missouri's A+
Scholarship Program](#)

Alternative math scores set for A+ Scholarship Program

Students in Missouri now have more options to meet the math requirement necessary to qualify for the state's A+ Scholarship Program.

Qualifying scores on the ACT and Compass exams were approved in February by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education as alternatives to the Algebra I end-of-course exam requirement for the A+ Program. Beginning with the high school graduating class of 2015, students must achieve one of the alternative scores if they do not score proficient or advanced on the end-of-course exam for Algebra I or a higher-level math class.

The alternative qualifying scores are:

- An ACT math sub-score of 17
- A Compass pre-algebra score of 43
- A Compass algebra score of 1

The board is charged with establishing the minimum qualifying scores annually.

The A+ Program provides scholarship funds to eligible graduates of A+ designated high schools who attend a participating public community college or vocational/technical school or certain private two-year vocational/technical schools.

The Algebra I end-of-course exam requirement for the A+ Scholarship is intended for students to demonstrate a mastery

of Algebra I skills and knowledge as an indicator of college preparedness. In keeping with that intent, the coordinating board established the minimum ACT and Compass scores to reflect a student's ability to understand and use basic algebraic concepts.

The scores were set based on an analysis of placement score information from Missouri's community colleges and placement score examples provided by ACT. Higher education officials say the scores represent real-world college placement practices. The coordinating board believes the scores strike a balance between the requirement's intent and the reality of the diversity in developmental coursework available at colleges and universities.

The alternative scores provide students with four ways to meet the A+ Program's college preparedness criterion:

- A score of proficient or advanced on the Algebra I end-of-course exam.
- A score of proficient or advanced on any mathematics end-of-course exam, authorized by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, that is a higher level than Algebra I.
- A score of 17 on the ACT math subtest, a score of 43 on the COMPASS pre-algebra exam or a score of 1 on the Compass algebra exam earned while in high school.

- A score of 17 on the ACT math subtest, a score of 43 on the COMPASS pre-algebra exam or a score of 1 on the Compass algebra exam earned while in college. Students in this category will not be eligible for reimbursement of tuition through the A+ Program until a qualifying score has been achieved. Until eligibility is established, students can seek assistance to remediate their math deficiencies, including taking developmental coursework at their own expense.

Students can retake any of the exams in an effort to achieve a qualifying score.

Once a student achieves one of the criteria for the A+ Scholarship math requirement, the student is considered to have met the requirement regardless of previous or subsequent scores received on any of the other options.

Prior to the board's approval, the alternative qualifying scores were vetted with high school counselors, postsecondary financial aid professionals, community college presidents and the State Student Financial Assistance Committee.

Missouri recognized for work on ‘reverse transfer’

Initiative will help more students earn an associate degree

Missouri's efforts to establish a “reverse transfer” program to help more students earn an associate degree has been recognized by the Lumina Foundation, a national organization working to increase the number of Americans with high-quality college degrees and professional certificates.

The Missouri Reverse Transfer Program creates a statewide policy that allows a student to transfer college credit from a four-year university to a two-year college the student has attended in order to complete requirements for an associate degree.

The program is currently being piloted at nine colleges and universities in the state.

“Missouri is a leader in this work,” Holly Zanville, strategy director for the Lumina Foundation, wrote in a letter to the Missouri Department of Higher Education. “Your project’s careful planning, development of a reasonable time line, positive policy environment and institutional roll-out steps are well-conceived and show great promise for a successful statewide reverse transfer program.”

Higher education officials say the reverse transfer program is designed to assist students who have earned a significant

number of college credits but have not received an associate or bachelor’s degree. Through the program, students who have completed the required community college credits can qualify for an associate degree after they have transferred to a four-year college or university or if they are not currently attending college.

Students must have at least 15 hours of credit from a two-year college to be eligible to receive an associate degree from that institution.

A statewide technology and communication system to streamline the sharing of grade transcripts also had to be developed.

Two-year and four-year colleges and universities were paired up for the pilot project in 2013. Participating institutions are:

- Columbia College and Moberly Area Community College
- Missouri State University and Ozarks Technical Community College
- Missouri Western State University and Metropolitan Community College
- Missouri Western State University and North Central Missouri College
- Northwest Missouri State University and Metropolitan Community College
- University of Missouri-Columbia and Moberly Area Community College
- University of Missouri-St. Louis and St. Louis Community College



MISSOURI REVERSE TRANSFER
seamless associate degree completion

Legislation approved by the Missouri General Assembly in 2012 called for the state to develop a reverse transfer policy for Missouri’s two- and four-year colleges and universities. A committee comprised of officials from the higher education institutions and the Missouri Department of Higher Education began work on a policy that would meet the needs of students and the institutions.

The pilot project will conclude in June. Plans are being made to expand the program to all public two- and four-year colleges and universities and participating private colleges in Missouri this fall.

FAFSA deadline for state financial aid approaching

The deadline for completing the FAFSA form to qualify for the Access Missouri Program is quickly approaching. Students must submit their FAFSA by April 1 to be eligible for the state financial aid program for the 2014-2015 academic year.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) can be completed and submitted online via the U.S. Department of Education's student aid website. Students will need a FAFSA PIN to complete the form online.

The FAFSA is used to calculate a student's Expected Family Contribution – the amount a student or student's family can reasonably be expected to pay toward college expenses. The EFC is used to determine how much financial assistance a student may be eligible to receive.

Access Missouri is a needs-based financial aid program for undergraduate students who are residents of Missouri. Student eligibility and award amounts are determined by the EFC and the type of postsecondary institution the student is attending.

Students should become familiar with the federal, state and institutional FAFSA deadlines. While the official federal deadline to submit the FAFSA is June 30, 2015, the deadlines for financial aid awarded by the state and many postsecondary institutions are earlier in the year. Students should check with the financial aid office at the college or university they

plan to attend or are currently attending to confirm the FAFSA deadline for that institution. The Missouri Department of Higher Education offers two YouTube videos that provide additional information about filling out the FAFSA and obtaining a FAFSA PIN: "Seven Steps to Completing the FAFSA" and "Applying for a Federal Student Aid PIN."

For more information about the Access Missouri Program, including additional qualifications for the program, visit <http://www.dhe.mo.gov/ppc/grants/accessmo.php>.



*Find out more about
the Free Application for
Federal Student Aid*

Videos offer basic financial aid training

The Missouri Department of Higher Education has created a series of videos to provide basic information about student financial aid programs to financial aid officers, admissions officers and high school guidance counselors.

The video series is designed for professionals who have limited knowledge of student financial aid programs and procedures.

The videos are updated each spring to offer the latest information about navigating federal and state financial aid requirements.

For more information about the beginner financial aid videos, contact Lesley Hendrix, training services coordinator at 800-4473-6757.





STEM Day at the Capitol

More than 200 students attended STEM Day at the Capitol March 6. K-12 schools showcased math and science projects and college and university representatives talked with students and legislators about STEM education and career opportunities in Missouri. The event was sponsored by the [Missouri Mathematics and Science Coalition](#), a group of organizations, including the Missouri Chamber of Commerce, government agencies, and businesses and community leaders working to promote the importance of science, technology, engineering and math education.

Colleges and universities participating in the event included:
University of Central Missouri, Northwest Missouri State University, Truman State University, St. Louis Community College, University of Missouri-St. Louis and Missouri University of Science and Technology.



New report looks at student interest in STEM



Read the ACT Condition of STEM report

As Missouri works to increase the number of students graduating with degrees in science, technology, engineering and math, a new report from ACT shows that many students say they are interested in STEM but are not planning to pursue a career in a STEM field.

According to the report, nearly half of the 2013 high school graduates taking the ACT test were interested in STEM majors and occupations, but only 23 percent expressed an interest in a STEM degree and career.

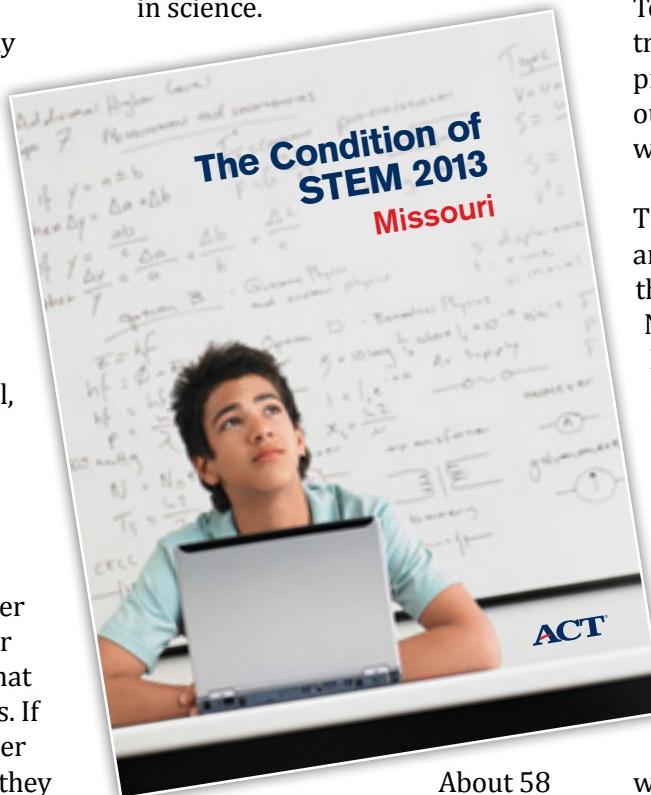
"The good news is that overall, student interest in STEM is high," said Jon Erickson, ACT president of education and career solutions. "We must do more to ensure that all students understand the career opportunities that match their interests, particularly those that exist in important STEM fields. If we can identify students earlier and then keep them engaged they may be more likely to choose a STEM career."

The ACT report also pointed to a gap between STEM interest and preparation for college-level math and science courses. Nationwide, about half of the high school graduates who took the ACT and were planning to pursue STEM majors and careers were not ready to succeed in first-year, college-level math or science courses.

In Missouri, 54 percent of the high school students who indicated an

interest in the STEM fields met the benchmark score for science on the ACT test; although an additional 17 percent missed the science benchmark by just two points.

Nationwide, 51 percent of students indicating an interest in the STEM fields achieved the benchmark score in science.



About 58 percent of Missouri students interested in STEM careers met the ACT benchmark score in math, with an additional 9 percent missing the benchmark by 2 points. The percentage of students nationwide meeting the math benchmark score matched Missouri at 58 percent.

The ACT benchmark score in each subject area represents the level of student achievement required to have a 50 percent chance of obtaining a grade of B or higher or a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C

or higher in a corresponding, credit-bearing first-year college course. The ACT benchmark score is 23 for science and 22 for math.

According to ACT, the STEM job outlook continues to be strong. A 2012 report by President Obama's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology concluded that if current trends continue, the need for STEM professionals will significantly outweigh the availability of those workers over the next decade.

The Missouri Economic Research and Information Center reports that from December 2012 through November 2013, companies in Missouri advertised nearly 50,000 job openings in the STEM fields. A number of these employment opportunities were located at some of the state's largest companies, including Monsanto, Boeing, IBM, Scottrade and Mercy Hospital System.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor, in 2012 the average wage for STEM jobs in Missouri was just over \$30 an hour – \$11 an hour more than the average wage for non-STEM jobs.

"Nothing is more costly to the nation than untapped potential, and that's why we must do more to ensure that all students understand the career opportunities that exist in important STEM fields," Erickson said.

The ACT Condition of STEM reports for the nation and each state can be found at: www.act.org/stemcondition.



[Learn more about Missouri's default prevention program](#)

DHE staff member earns financial counselor certification



Sarah Schedler

Sarah Schedler, a member of the default prevention staff at the Department of Higher Education, was recently certified by the Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education as a financial counselor.

The department's default prevention staff works to help Missouri students make sound financial decisions. Marilyn Landrum, a default prevention specialist at the department, received AFCPE certification in 2009.

Schedler and Landrum participate in college fairs, conduct "Planning and Paying for College" presentations, and coordinate a variety of activities throughout the state that promote financial literacy and default prevention related to student loan borrowing and repayment.

AFCPE is a non-profit, professional organization dedicated to educating, training and certifying financial counselors and educators.

Russell receives MU College of Education award

Missouri Commissioner of Higher Education David Russell was selected to receive the 2014 MU College of Education Citation of Merit for Outstanding Achievement and Meritorious Service Award.

Russell was honored March 14 during the College of Education's 46th Annual Recognition Awards Banquet in Columbia.

Russell earned his doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Missouri-Columbia, his master's degree from The American University and his bachelor's degree from Henderson State University.

As Missouri's commissioner of higher education since 2010, Russell provides overall leadership for a state system that serves approximately 400,000 students through 13 public four-year and 19 public two-year institutions, one two-year technical college, 25 independent colleges and universities and 150 proprietary and private career schools.

The nominators for the award noted Russell's policies and initiatives in the areas of student retention, time-to-degree and degree completion have raised the national profile of Missouri higher education. He has removed policies and procedures that serve

as barriers in an effort increase the percentage of working adults in Missouri with a degree or certificate to 60 percent by the year 2025.

In addition to his work in Missouri, Russell serves nationally on the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, Midwest High Education Consortium and American Council on Education.

In addition, Russell has served as a member of the Community Foundation of Central Missouri, Columbia Chamber of Commerce, and the Family and Community Trust of Missouri.

Postsecondary connections

More college presidents using social media to communicate with students

A 2013 study by the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth shows that a growing number of college presidents and chancellors are using social media to communicate with students. Nearly 60 percent are posting on Facebook, while more than 55 percent are using Twitter.

Missouri college presidents and chancellors are among those adopting social media as a way to connect with students.

Missouri State University President Clif Smart is a frequent Twitter user. In a recent interview with the *Springfield News-Leader*, Smart said he began tweeting about a year ago after being encouraged by staff who thought it might help with the university's recruitment efforts.

For some college leaders, social media has provided a creative outlet – from the photos they take at campus events to the name they choose for their Twitter account. Northwest Missouri State University President John Jasinski sends out his Twitter messages as @presidentjazz. New University of Missouri Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin – known for his vast collection of bow ties – chose @bowtieger for his

Twitter handle. Just months after arriving in Columbia, Loftin has attracted more than 11,000 followers.

While Twitter has provided college leaders with another way to connect with students, Truman State University President Troy Paino has attracted an even wider audience through YouTube. A video sent out during semester break to let students know he was anxiously awaiting their return included a tricycle trip across campus and a marshmallow roast with Truman mascot, "Spike." The [YouTube video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9e_CC0x6wnl) (www.youtube.com/watch?v=9e_CC0x6wnl) has been seen by more than 60,000 viewers – 10 times the number of students on Truman's campus.

Presidents and chancellors say social media provides them with an opportunity to show a side of their personality students might not otherwise see.

"It makes me more approachable," Smart said. "I'm no longer just the



old bald guy sitting in the admin building."

Smart, Loftin and Missouri University of Science and Technology Chancellor Cheryl Schrader were recently featured in an [article on the Eduventures](#) website that offered advice for college and university leaders using social media.

"Twitter is just a great way to connect with people on a less formal and more personal level," Schrader said. "Presidents, chancellors and other campus leaders who tweet must use their own voice and avoid 'institutionalese.'

Missouri Department of Higher Education on Facebook

The Missouri Department of Higher Education is now on Facebook.

Facebook posts include news about the department and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education, postsecondary programs, state and federal financial aid updates, higher-

education legislation, events and other information.

The department also sponsors the *Journey to College* Facebook page, which provides information about higher education to parents and students. The page offers links to news about planning and paying for college, including financial

aid and scholarship information, and the benefits of earning a postsecondary degree or certificate.



Find the Facebook pages at:
- facebook.com/MoHigherEd
- facebook.com/Journey to College



Volunteers assist Missouri students, families during FAFSA Frenzy

Dozens of volunteers throughout Missouri spent a snowy Sunday afternoon Feb. 9 helping students and their parents fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid during FAFSA Frenzy.

Sponsored annually by the Department of Higher Education, FAFSA Frenzy was expanded this year to 81 events in 44 counties during January, February and March.

During the past 10 years, FAFSA Frenzy volunteers have provided assistance to more than 10,000 students in Missouri.

Students must fill out a FAFSA every year to be eligible for most types of federal and state financial aid, including grants, loans and scholarships.

Students who attended a FAFSA Frenzy event were entered into a statewide drawing for a scholarship that can be used for a higher education program in Missouri for the fall 2014 term. Scholarship funds are being provided by the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority and the Missouri Association of Student Financial Aid Personnel.

